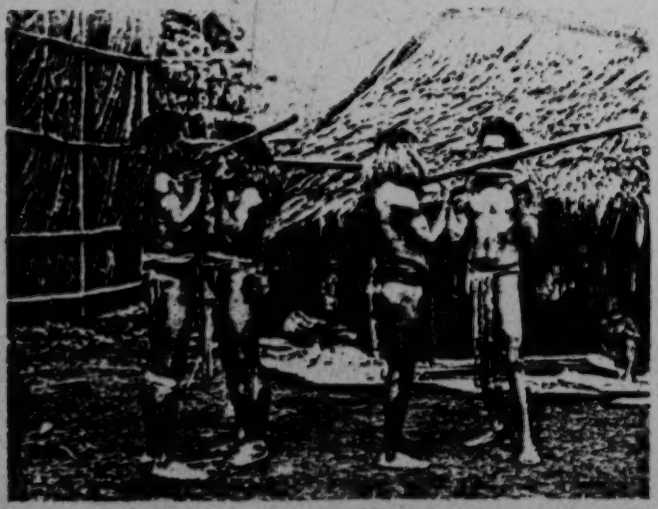
1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

881
344

(*a*) Initiates secluded in the *Oro*



881
534
291

(*b*) Initiates playing the *Sepiri* or Sacred Flute

PLATE XXIV [facing p. 182]

1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

of *kokumbari*, the bestowal of *otobu*, and the precautionary or purificatory rites (*ate-ate* and *sama*) which bring the cycle of ceremonies to an end.

Before proceeding with the description of seclusion, it is necessary to make one important matter clear, viz. that I am here dealing only with the seclusion that forms a part of the initiation cycle. There is another seclusion, viz. that through which girls must pass at the age of puberty. It appears that the manner of internment is in both cases much the same, but in order to avoid confusion I shall mention the distinction between them, calling one the initiatory seclusion and the other the puberty seclusion; and I shall reserve a description of the latter until the end of the chapter. A girl enters her puberty seclusion immediately upon her first menstruation, and may pass through it alone. Subsequently she may be one of a batch of youths and girls who are to undergo initiation together, and in that case she will pass through a second seclusion, viz. the initiatory seclusion. It is this which I shall proceed to deal with.

Seclusion is practised by all the tribes, north and south; and it appears that the same general rules are observed in all cases. The house of seclusion, removed a little distance from the village, stands in a small enclosure (*sama*) fenced about with palm-leaf barriers some thirteen or fourteen feet in height. The house is called *oro* (Aiga) [1] and may in some instances, I am told, accommodate both boy and girl candidates; for it is said that they are all 'brothers and sisters' and may, therefore, be trusted to behave. Usually, however, those who arrange the matter are less trusting, and the two sexes are confined separately. One house of seclusion which I saw was about 9 feet by 15 feet in area and consisted of a single large room in which nine boys were confined. The house was closed in on all sides and the eyes of the inmates seemed very wide in the perpetual semi-darkness. The secluded children are called *i-tukari-mei*, 'The children who are shut up above', or simply *i-mei*, 'the on-top children'. They occupy the upper part of a pile house, the actual ground floor of which is used by the old men who

[1] Binandele *oaoa*; Humjara *tbua* (Chimney and Beaver).